draw to the attention of this House the report submitted to the Government of Bengal by the Retrenchment Committee appointed by the Government of Bengal to consider the reduction of the pay of the Bengal Civil Service (Executive Branch) with Mr. J. Donald as the President. The powers of this House are so restricted that it could not discuss and vote upon many items of expenditure and it would therefore be better as has been suggested, to appoint a Retrenchment Committee, I may add, consisting mainly of non-official members enjoying the confidence of this House; or else the appointment of such a Committee would prove to be another source for wasting the hard-earned money of the loyal subjects of His Highness.

The Depressed Classes.—

I would earnestly request the Government to bestow more attention than hitherto on the education of the so-called untouchables. It is a matter of extreme regret that the depressed classes of Cochin are a neglected section of the people who are not much benefited by the present administration Though Cochin is one of the most educated and enlightened States in India, the depressed classes in the State are still kept down in ignorance and in an almost semi-barbarous State. It is to be noted here that, in the budget, there is an allotment of Rs. 7,600 for Pulaya education. But this amount, I submit, is too small and insufficient for the education of one lakh of people constituting the depressed classes, out of a total population of about 10 lakhs. The education of these semi-barbarous people, representing more than one-tenth of the population, has been practically neglected and ignored in the past, with the result that they are now absolutely illiterate. It would seem to be strange that in these days when we are making costly arrangements for Secondary and Collegiate education, a section of His Highness' subjects, who are practically dumb, should be deprived of opportunities to receive instruction in the three Rs.

I beg to submit that a heavy responsibility rests upon the Government to give special facilities and encouragement for the education of the depressed classes. In order to undo the wrong

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done to them in the past and to enable them to come rapidly in line with the more advanced classes, special and earnest efforts should be made by us as well as the Government. It is reported that a society called the Depressed Classes Development Society has been formed but this is only to put dust in the eyes of the people. We are kept in blissful ignorance of what the Society has till now done for the elevation of the depressed classes. It is the duty of the Government to take adequate measures by appointing, if necessary, a special officer, as is done in the Madras Presidency and Travancore, to protect the interests of the depressed classes and also to open to them all public roads, thorough-fares, wells and instiutions.

Excise.—

From the Financial Statement submitted yesterday, it becomes clear that the Excise policy of the Government is to secure a maximum revenue from a minimum consumption. This policy is questionable, especially as we find that consumption has not decreased in proportion to the increase of revenue. We must respectfully express our deep disappointment that our Government has not yet taken definite and bold steps towards the goal of Prohibition. The steps taken, if any, are unsatisfactory and disappointing. The present policy, therefore, is, I may be permitted to say, untenable, unjustifiable and also condemnable. The public cannot value verbal expressions of sympathy for reducing consumption, unless followed by deliberate and consistent action on proper lines. The total Excise revenue for 1101 is budgetted to be Rs. 11,45,000. This is most deplorable. We have, however, to take note of one fact, namely, that it is an unsound policy to depend upon the Excise revenue. What Sir A. R. Banerji, the talented Diwan of Mysore, says in his opening speech at the Birthday Session of the Mysore Assembly 1925 should apply, before long, to our State also. He says "Experience shows that the Excise revenue is steadily coming down." Enlightened Rulers have begun to realise this fact and also that the menace of liquor traffic must be faced and overcome, if the highest interests of their people are to be safeguarded. Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal has decreed the total prohibition of the liquor traffic within

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